



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

an unblushing compliment to King and Queen, is even hazier in the German:

Den Göttern danken jetzt wir Horen,
Die nie bisher zum Glück erkoren,
Und dies erlebt.

Schröer's Prolegomena zu einer Enzyklopädie und Methodologie der englischen Philologie are not light reading. If the mere Prolegomena occupy full twenty-three pages, how many will the theory itself require? And, after all, is there a Methodologie of English? There is a method, of course, in studying *Laut-und Formenlehre* and there may be something like a method in confronting the infinite phenomena of literature. But when one has got beyond the beginnings, one's wisest course is to follow one's individual bent and, through copious reading, become permeated with the spirit of the past. At p. 328 Schröer contrasts the *heiligen Ernst* of the German philologist with the self-oblivion of the English devotee who may perhaps break out suddenly with the invention of new flies for angling or improved cuff-buttons. Can this be a thrust at Furnivall? At any rate the question is scarcely to be taken up here. Schröer's paper ends with the outburst of the dying Faust:

Und so verbringt, umrungen von Gefahr,
Hier Kindheit, Mann und Greis sein tüchtig Jahr.

The quotation may be applicable to the ideal professor in his later years. But the younger Dozent would derive more profit from Goethe's earlier exhortation:

Greift nur hinein ins volle Menschenleben!
Und wo ihr's packt, da ist's interessant.

In conclusion one thought obtrudes itself. Why, in a German Festschrift, such predominance of English study? I raise the question, without attempting an answer. Viëtor is an admirable Anglist, witness his studies in the runes and in Shakespeare. Yet his labors in French and German are no less admirable. One may observe a like Anglican tendency in various Zeitschriften and Studien and Beiträge of mixed character.

J. M. HART.

Cornell University.

Essentials of Poetry. By Professor William Allan Neilson, Harvard University. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1912.

Few books on this difficult subject have within recent years been more cordially welcomed than Professor Neilson's. Not to do injustice to its positive merits, the cordial welcome is perhaps primarily due to negative qualities,—the absence of eccentricity, of crabbedness, of any desire to exploit a theory of

the writer's at the expense of all other theories, or to force a new terminology upon the student. Related to these negative merits is the positive one of an analytical method which is neither superficial nor over-complex, and which is at every point supported by specific illustration. So generous is the last mentioned element that the book should prove profitable to the student of poetry through its study of representative passages, even if all the theories set forth should be considered untenable. The writer is consistent, then, in regarding his main purpose as being not so much to contribute to "a theoretical construction of the universe" as to assist in "clearing our vision and sharpening our sensibilities with a view to a more intense enjoyment of art."

The main thesis of the book may be stated briefly, almost in the author's words. Taking a famous dictum of Bacon as starting-point, according to which the faculties of the soul are said to be three, Memory, Imagination, and Reason, we may find in poetry three corresponding elements, imagination (which here has naturally the first place), reason, and—with a change of phrasing—the "sense of fact." Three tendencies in the history of poetry correspond to these three elements: romanticism being the tendency characterized by the predominance of the imagination, classicism by the predominance of reason, realism by the predominance of the sense of fact. The major portion of the volume is devoted to the exposition and proof of these statements. A second portion is devoted to what Professor Neilson calls the quality of Intensity in poetry, and to an analysis of the significance for poetry of the contrasted qualities of Sentimentalism and Humor.

The space at our disposal does not admit of any thorough examination of Professor Neilson's principal thesis, with the interesting ramifications of the discussion as it is related to the vexed question of definitions of classicism and romanticism. The most dangerous aspects of this question he skillfully avoids. Romanticism, for example, is everywhere sanely treated as a tendency, present in every age and in almost every poet; not as a "Movement," with definite chronological and personal limits,—the very existence of which careful students are increasingly tending to doubt. It is evident from a sentence in the Preface that one object of the discussion is to free the term "Romanticism" from the inclusiveness of meaning which has made it possible "to charge this phase of art with the whole burden of modern artistic sins,"—an allusion, no doubt, to such discussions as that of Professor Irving Babbitt, whose *New Laocöon*, stimulating and wholesome as it is, involves sweeping generalizations which have made students of the history of English poetry stare and gasp. Tending per-

haps to the other extreme, Professor Neilson would confine the term "romantic" to processes in which the element of imagination clearly predominates; and in demonstrating the plausibility of this limitation he exhibits great ingenuity and persuasiveness. If a suspicion is sometimes stirred up that he is begging the question, such a suspicion is almost inevitable in a discussion of this character; for the problem of artistic analysis always tends to complete a logical circle, starting with the assumption that *a* is *x*, and then proceeding to show that if *a* is *x* all those things which are true of *x* are true of *a*. In other words, if romanticism means imaginationism, whenever we find imagination hard at work,—in reviving the enchantments of the Middle Age, in emphasizing subjectivity, in developing naturalism,—we shall feel sure that we are using the term with real significance. And that Professor Neilson's discussion of the imaginative aspect of these commonly-treated phases of "romanticism" does enhance their significance, few will be found to deny.

It remains to note a few queries which the discussion of the threefold thesis has raised in the mind of the present reviewer. The first of these is due to the definition of *reason* as the basis of classicism. For this purpose, we are told, reason "includes the power of calculating proportions, of perceiving the relevant and the fit, of preserving harmony, of adapting means to ends, of ordering and arranging and selecting detail." Is it not fairly obvious that this statement has been framed with reference to the proposed application of the definition to what is called "classical" in matters of art, rather than as an uncolored account of what would be understood by the reason in opposition to the imagination? It admirably expresses what everyone feels to be involved in the efforts and products of the great classical artists; but was their framing of their material according to relevancy, fitness, harmony, and order, necessarily unimaginative? Was the imagination yielding to reason when the concept of the Parthenon was born? Is the imagination never orderly, without being faithless to its inmost nature? Such questions in no way impair the actual contrasts in types which Professor Neilson discusses; but they awaken dissatisfaction with the use of some of the terms. He has, no doubt wisely, avoided the effort to define the imagination exhaustively; but we must at least know whether he implies that Wordsworth and Coleridge were wrong in conceiving it to be involved in the highest degree in the process of structural creation. In other words, must we return to the conception of Dryden's age, that imagination and reason are essentially opposed?

A second query concerns the third division of the prob-

lem,—the “sense of fact” which results in realism. Again one must admit and emphasize that Professor Neilson’s discussion of this neglected element of poetry is fresh and illuminating. But it is a question whether one can be satisfied to make it coördinate with the other two elements,—imagination and reason. To take the first one: if the imagination involves memory, as psychology commonly teaches, as well as creative fantasy, how can it be altogether in opposition to the sense of fact? (Memory, it will be recalled, is Bacon’s term for Neilson’s “sense of fact.”) The point is brought out more distinctly in a comment on one of Burns’s love songs: its “imaginative atmosphere is evident” in certain matters of style, but at the bottom it is factual,—that is, it expresses “a very definite and human expression of longing for a definite and human girl.” Is the power, then, to reproduce and communicate this very definite personal longing not an imaginative power? And have we been in the wrong in regarding the development of realism as one of the most important by-products of the romantic imagination? Or, again, what of the conspicuous reaction from the love of the *general* characteristic of the “neo-classical” era, in the direction of the specific, the concrete, in the “romantic” era;—the individual flower, “the single tree that I have looked upon”? The relation here between memory and creation, between sense of fact and imagination, may be variously stated; but whatever it be, it would not seem to be one of contrast. Once more, in the chapter on “intensity,” discussing the opening stanza of *The Eve of St. Agnes*, Professor Neilson speaks of Keats as making “his sense of fact subserve his imagination,” and of his “unsurpassed power of combining these two elements.” Many of us would not think of them as separable elements. Is it possible that, for such purposes of contrast, the author has restricted the term imagination to its more transcendental or metaphysical meaning?

In like manner it might be questioned whether the “sense of fact” is not sometimes an element of the rational process, as truly as of the imaginative. But sufficient has been said to make clear the nature of the objection,—not to the separate discussion of the element of realism, but to making it coördinate with the two other members of the scheme.

A third and final query will take us into the second portion of the volume, where the quality of poetic “intensity” is discussed. It should be explained that the formulation of this theme is undertaken by Professor Neilson in part as a substitute for the discussion of the more conventional subject of the emotional element in poetry. Emotion is admitted to be a general source of poetic vitality in all types of the art, but

"the quality aimed at by such writers as Milton and Wordsworth" (when they use the terms "passionate" or "passion") is believed to be more fitly termed *intensity*. This quality, we are told, is most characteristic of the imagination, but is also predicable of the reason and the sense of fact: in the case of the reason it may stand for a "degree of clarity," in the sense of fact for "the degree of force and precision and fullness with which the fact is perceived or remembered." Finally, we read that this quality is necessary everywhere in poetry "in order to produce the 'elevating excitement of the soul,' the ecstasy in which for an instant we see things *sub specie æternitatis*." Now this, like all the rest, is highly stimulating, and some of the applications of the term—such as the perception of insufficient intensity in Landor and Gray, and the allegation that it was this quality which Arnold really meant in speaking of "high seriousness"—lead one at first thought to expect that it may turn out to be a clue to many things. But the present reviewer must confess that, the longer he has pondered it, the more vague it has become. If it is not inseparable from emotion, one looks for some other psychological fact to which it may be attached. But intensity, as Professor Neilson himself admits, is to be found in *any* element of experience; if, then, it sometimes amounts to very great clearness, and again to very great precision or very great force in the statement of fact,—is it then mere *veryness*, so to say? the quality of being striking, or perhaps simply of being excellent, in whatever direction? In this case, how can it be an element in any way characteristic of poetry? Unless, after all, the term drives us back to emotional stimulus, which the great body of criticism has persisted in believing to be fundamental in this subject. It is true that the term "emotion" has tended to become unsatisfactory, partly because of its being confined to matters more properly described by "sentiment" or "sentimentalism;" but Professor Neilson's account of these matters shows how careful distinctions may be made here. And the fact of emotional stimulus seems after all to be unescapable.

Perhaps the search for a new term may have been due to the difficulty in distinguishing emotion on the part of the poet and on the part of the reader,—two things not commonly discriminated. One of the permanent problems of poetic analysis is the proper statement of the relations between the imaginative and the emotional elements of poetry, elements which are sometimes (but wrongly) treated as co-ordinate, and sometimes (again wrongly) as identical. A definition attempted elsewhere by the present writer undertook to meet this difficulty by the phrases "with chief refer-

ence to the emotions and by means of the imagination,"—basing the distinction, that is, on the difference between means and end. Now Professor Neilson points out justly that "intensity" is attained usually by an imaginative process, but less commonly by other processes. If, as seems likely, he really means by this quality a marked capacity for stirring the emotions, we can then understand its significance. Emotional excitement on the part of the poet, expressing itself in an imaginative flash, is the most common means of stirring up emotion in the reader; but the same result may be attained, on occasion, by other means,—the pulse may be quickened by the logical beauty of a syllogism, or the vivid, though unimaginative, statement of a significant fact. But if it is quickened, if there is anything at all suggestive of "elevating excitement" or "ecstasy," the main process would seem to be emotional. Otherwise, indeed, could the very word "intensity" have any meaning?

Such queries as these may suggest a question whether the more conspicuous aspects of Professor Neilson's book, its attractively symmetrical classification of qualities, tendencies, and the like, have the value which the reader is at first led to hope for. Or they may only suggest a need for restatement and the more guarded use of terms. But in any event, as has already appeared, the real value of the discussion is not dependent upon these matters. The two concluding chapters, on Sentimentalism and Humor in poetry, which do not profess to furnish new formulæ or definitions, are perhaps the most certainly useful of all, dealing, as they do, with qualities everywhere needing tasteful discrimination. On the relation of humor to poetry practically nothing has been written earlier, and there can be little question of the general soundness of Professor Neilson's analysis. Last of all, the book has a good index, fit to guide the student to the right use of the contents.

RAYMOND MACDONALD ALDEN.

The University of Illinois.

ENGLISH TRAGICOMEDY: ITS ORIGIN AND HISTORY, by Frank Humphrey Ristine, Ph. D. New York. The Columbia University Press. (The Macmillan Company.) 1910. Pp. 247. \$1.50.

This work, with its clear introductory description of many elements of tragicomedy, begins well. The magnitude of the ground which it thereupon attempts to cover may be suggested by the following list of its principal topics: the Renaissance debate whether tragicomedy was sanctioned by classical authority; the tragi-comic character of much of the